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Letter dated 3 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In view of the continuing illegal practices being perpetrated in Jerusalem by the Israelis, the Arab Group in New York would like to bring the attention of the Security Council to the criminal attacks being carried out by the Israeli occupation authorities against the important Islamic antiquities in and features of the city of Jerusalem and, in particular, the historic Maman Allah cemetery, where thousands of important Arab and Islamic figures are buried.

After the Israeli Supreme Court approved the building of a so-called museum of tolerance on the remaining land of this historic Islamic graveyard, Israeli bulldozers destroyed historic graves in the Maman Allah cemetery and removed all remaining features thereof, and destroyed the Supreme Islamic Council building that was on the same site.

Such attempts to Judaize the holy city and change its Arab and Islamic character represent a flagrant attack on the rights of Palestinians and the sanctity of their graves, on things that are sacred to Islam and on the Islamic heritage, which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has declared should be preserved. Further, such Israeli measures contravene not only the rules of international humanitarian law relating to an occupying Power such as Israel, but also all international norms and the relevant United Nations resolutions, which request Israel to preserve the religious sites and historic antiquities of Jerusalem.

The Arab Group condemns the repeated Israeli acts of aggression that are intended to create a new reality on the ground and Judaize the city of Jerusalem and its religious and historic characteristics, and warns of the consequences of this dangerous and irresponsible step, which will kindle feelings of rage in the Arab and Islamic worlds, given that the Maman Allah cemetery constitutes part of the history of the city of Jerusalem. The Arab Group requests the Security Council to bring pressure to bear on Israel to halt forthwith the continuing acts of aggression and illegal unilateral measures that will increase tension and instability in the region, thereby threatening international security and peace.

The Arab Group is extremely hopeful that your earnest and urgent endeavours will put an end to this situation.

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In accordance with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdulla M. **Alsaidi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Yemen
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Arab Group